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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: RUSSIA ON NEW MONITORS, RELATIONS WITH WEST

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Alice G.
Wells. Reason 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: The Ambassador pressed DFM Karasin on September 12 to agree to the text authorizing the additional OSCE monitors with access to Abkhazia and South Ossetia. Karasin blamed Georgia for holding up the mandate, acknowledged eight OSCE monitors in the two zones were not many, and indicated Russia might be open to discussing enlarging the number at some point in the future. Karasin justified Russia's intention to put 7,600 troops in the two regions by claiming recognition had "changed the situation." MFA Director Kelin told visiting Czech officials (protect) that Russia expected Abkhazia would remain independent, but that South Ossetia would most likely eventually be incorporated into North Ossetia because its independence was not economically viable. He said Russia would consider a failure of the EU to get the 200 monitors in by October 1 a breach of the agreement, which would free Russia of its obligations. The only issue related to Abkhazia and South Ossetia Russia would discuss at the October 15 conference was return of IDP's. MFA officials told the Czechs that September 11 phone calls between the Secretary and FM Lavrov and NSA Hadley and Security Council Advisor Prikhodko demonstrated that Washington "has decided to get over Georgia," and downplayed the cost. End Summary.

Karasin on Monitors, Russian Troops

12. (C) On the margins of the September 12 return of the Harvard bells, Ambassador pressed DFM Karasin on Russia's unwillingness to approve the mandate for the additional OSCE observers for Georgia. Karasin said he believed the Georgians were to blame, asking if they weren't the ones being obstructionist. Finally, he said he "got" the Ambassador's point. He acknowledged that eight OSCE monitors was a small number, and indicated that Russia might be willing to discuss enlarging the number in the future, but not now. He rejected the Ambassador's argument that Russia's stationing of 7,600 troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia was a clear violation of the cease-fire accord, claiming that Russia's recognition of the two regions "changed the situation" and justified deployment of the troops.

Czech's Give Insight on Troops, Status, Relations

13. (C) Officials from the Czech Foreign Ministry and Embassy (protect) reported to us on their meeting September 12 with MFA Director for the Caucasus Kelin and MFA North America Deputy Director Burmistrov. Kelin told them that there was no need for Russian "peacekeepers;" the 7600 Russian forces would be there "at the invitation" of the two regions' leaders. When questioned how this met the August 8 cease-fire plan, Kelin said the plan was still valid but he reiterated Karasin's comment that the situation had changed with recognition. The conflict was now resolved, and Tbilisi

"had lost because they were stupid." The EU monitors' mission was to ensure that Georgia did not attack again. Russia expected Abkhazia would remain independent and have an association with Russia like that with Belarus, but that South Ossetia would most likely eventually be incorporated into North Ossetia because its independence was not economically viable. In response to the Czechs' position that they would not recognize the two regions and it would lead to a Cyprus-like model, Kelin said Russia was fine with that. The only issue related to Abkhazia and South Ossetia that Russia would discuss at the October 15 conference was the return of IDP's; discussion of security and stabilization would be limited to the areas surrounding the two territories.

14. (C) The Czechs told us Kelin said if the EU was unable to get 200 monitors into the region by October 1, Russia would consider it a breach of the agreement and would no longer be bound by any of the agreement's terms. The Czechs said they believed Kelin was confident the EU would not meet the deadline.

15. (C) The Czechs also told us that mid-level MFA officials told them Russia interpreted the September 11 phone calls between the Secretary and FM Lavrov and NSA Hadley and Security Council Advisor Prikhodko as demonstrating that Washington "has decided to get over Georgia." The Czechs were told that the cost to Russia was "perceived as zero since the 123 Agreement would not have made it through Congress this year anyway." Washington could only blame itself for supporting "mad Saakashvili." While Russia "hated NATO," it also hated that the EU and U.S. felt they could do things together, without Russian participation. The Czech delegation maintained that they were warned that if MAP remained on the table for Ukraine, Russia was "ready to take action."

Comment

16. (C) While the Czechs received a full dose of Russian bombast, Russia is clearly trying to show the EU that relations, including with the U.S., are returning "to normal," and to press the EU to hasten the process.
BEYRLE